



News Release

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Two USDA agencies and the State of Louisiana sign Shared Stewardship agreement

Baton Rouge, LA, April 7, 2022 — Yesterday, USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service signed a Shared Stewardship Agreement with the State of Louisiana at a ceremony in Baton Rouge. The agreement reaffirms USDA's commitment to work with the State of Louisiana, tribal nations and other partners, using the best available science to identify high-priority management treatments that ensure the long-term sustainability of public and private lands.

The agreement establishes a framework for federal and Louisiana State agencies to collaborate more frequently, focus on accomplishing mutual goals, further common interests, and effectively respond to the increasing ecological challenges such as the health of forests across boundaries.

"Louisiana's natural resources, our forests, wildlife, streams, and fish, will benefit tremendously as we accentuate our efforts as natural resource managers, working more closely together for the people of Louisiana and the nation," stated Governor John Bel Edwards.

In addition, the agreement will allow the agencies to promote the vitality of wildlife and fish populations on federal, state and other lands, provide for the protection of native plant and wildlife populations from interference of non-native invasives, as well as address any additional natural resource concerns in Louisiana.

"I am pleased to be in my home state of Louisiana to sign this landmark agreement," said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore. "Together, the Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the state of Louisiana will work across boundaries to improve the health and resilience of forests in this beautiful state."

Through Shared Stewardship, state and federal agencies will respond more effectively to forests and community needs following severe weather events like hurricanes, tornadoes. It also further engages tribal nations, supporting tribal sovereignty, and ensuring partnership with tribes in a collaborative approach to land management.

“As I look across Louisiana, I see productive fields and forests across the landscape,” said Mike Strain, Louisiana’s Commissioner of Agriculture. “As we focus on an all-lands approach, we accept this challenge together to manage these lands for timber, crops, wildlife and fish.”

“Signing this shared stewardship agreement is integral to the conservation of our natural resources,” explained State Conservationist Richard Kacir. “Louisiana’s agricultural producers, ranchers and forestland owners will benefit from this historic agreement.”

The agreement was signed by:

John Bel Edwards, Governor, State of Louisiana

Randy Moore, Chief, USDA Forest Service

Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Richard Kacir, Louisiana State Conservationist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

In addition to being in Louisiana for the signing event, Chief Moore also took time to tour hurricane-damaged areas of the Kisatchie National Forest and view ongoing recovery efforts.

To read the agreement, visit the Forest Service Southern Region’s website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r8/workingtogether/partnerships>.

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